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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TRIPOLI 000566

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/MAG, AF/FO, AF/E AND AF/RSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/14/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV ER SO SU KSUM AU LY

SUBJECT: AU SUMMIT: A/S CARSON'S AND SE GRATION'S MEETING WITH THE ARAB LEAGUE

TRIPOLI 00000566 001.2 OF 002

CLASSIFIED BY: Gene A. Cretz, Ambassador, US Embassy Tripoli,
Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: During a July 1 meeting on the margins of the African Union (AU) Summit in Sirte, Libya, Arab League (AL) Secretary General Amr Moussa told Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson and Special Envoy for Sudan Scott Gration that he would press member states to financially support stability initiatives in Somalia and Sudan but cautioned that Arab nations would need to see dramatic reductions in violence if they were to provide troops for peacekeeping operations. Moussa offered to intervene on the USG's behalf with Qatar in order to stem that country's support for Eritrea and its proxy war with Ethiopia in Somalia, and highlighted AL support for the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG). On Sudan, he congratulated the Special Envoy on his coordination efforts to solve the crisis there and noted the gradual reduction in tensions in Darfur over the past five months. Moussa said he appreciates the USG's comprehensive approach to the situation in Sudan -- seeking security, humanitarian assistance, and political stability at the same time. Moussa laid out the AL's support for North-South unity in Sudan after the 2011 referendum on partition and asked that the USG coordinate with other international donors to ensure that development assistance to Sudan would be effective in promoting political and economic unity within the nation. End Summary.

ARAB LEAGUE SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA WILL BE FINANCIAL

¶2. (C) AL Secretary General Amr Moussa told A/S Carson that he would continue to vocally support the TFG in Somalia as he had in a speech at the opening of the 13th AU Summit in Sirte, Libya. Moussa views al-Shabaab as "destructive" and agreed that if they were allowed to topple the TFG, Somalia would be "back at square one." According to Moussa, the AL has a duty to help Somalia move from chaos to promise.

¶3. (C) Moussa said that the AL has maintained an active interest in Somalia since 1991, and many member states viewed the situation there through a lens of fear, aversion, and concern.

For his part, Moussa has tried to explain to Arab states that the new TFG is different than the one led by Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed. The AL Secretariat has sent funds to Sharif through formal channels and is encouraging members to do the same. However, the AL's experience with financial support has been negative -- Moussa complained that Somali ministers have long taken for their personal use money donated for security forces. A/S Carson detailed the USG's recent assistance in the form of weapons, ammunition, and cash to pay salaries. Moussa said Arab nations would be able to provide financial and technical assistance -- including Iraq which is ready to provide Sheikh Sharif with \$5 million -- but were unable to have their troops "thrown into the fire." He added that the AL would not achieve any success in getting members to provide peacekeepers without a Security Council resolution specifically calling for them.

¶4. (S) A/S Carson encouraged Moussa to use his position to condemn spoilers like Eritrean President Isaias, who has used Somalia as a proxy battleground for its on-going political disagreements with Ethiopia. A/S Carson held out the Emir of Qatar as one of the primary supporters of Eritrea and al-Shabaab, noting that he had sent one of his deputies to Doha in mid-May to discuss the issue with the Qatari MFA, only to have the meeting request denied. Moussa mentioned that he had raised the issue on that same day with the Emir, who shared the dais with him at the opening ceremony of the AU summit. The Emir categorically denied he was supporting al-Shabaab via Eritrea and said that whatever funds Qatar had paid were official and for investment purposes. Moussa told the Emir that he had heard many Africans talking about Iranian and Qatari support for Eritrea's proxy war in Somalia and encouraged the Emir to state publicly his denial of improper support. He told A/S Carson that he was surprised by the Qatari MFA's refusal to meet USG officials and promised to intercede with them to persuade them to listen to our points. A/S Carson asked Moussa to also make the point that supporting al-Shabaab would not be in Qatar's interest, either, and their rise would lead to decreased stability in Horn of Africa and the Red Sea.

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MOUSSA APPRECIATES NEW US POSITION ON SUDAN, SEEKS NORTH-SOUTH UNITY

¶5. (C) Turning to SE Gration, Moussa congratulated him on a recent CPA conference in the U.S. and said he appreciated the USG's new comprehensive approach to peace in Sudan. SE Gration thanked Moussa for his counsel and stressed that the limited time before the April 2010 elections and 2011 referendum on North-South partition called for urgent action. SE Gration provided Moussa with a read out of his recent activities, including meetings with all major rebel factions and a late-June trip to N'Djamena to seek rebel unity and buy-in from President Deby to push for a cease fire and non-aggression pact. Gration noted that Libya had been helpful in getting the governments in N'Djamena and Khartoum to talk, and added that more should be done to accelerate the 2008 Doha Accord.

¶6. (C) The Special Envoy provided a road map for future engagement in Sudan, including looking over the horizon and forecasting the need to plan for resettlement of IDPs now and the provision of reconstruction and development assistance in areas subjected to decades of violence. He laid out three desired objectives: helping the North and South to govern better and make unity an attractive option, getting the Sudanese to make peace between tribes to instill hope for a better future among the people, and managing the transition from war to peace to create a prosperous Sudan that grows surplus crops and brings them to market efficiently.

¶7. (C) Moussa said he was closely monitoring the situation in Sudan and congratulated SE Gration on the "immense difference" he saw in U.S. policy vis-a-vis Sudan in recent months. Moussa commented that the comprehensive peace solution contrasted against previous policy that sought to corner and punish the

Khartoum government and that the new approach would foster an environment in which Sudanese officials could be persuaded to cooperate. Moussa stated that a late-May trip to Darfur left him with high hopes, noting that there seemed to be less tension on the ground. Saying that the Chad-Sudan border was little more than a "crossing point that brings violence", he encouraged increased dialogue within the framework of the Doha and Abuja agreements to create a mood that allows for peace.

¶ 8. (C) Moussa said the AL would continue to support North-South unity in Sudan and has supported investment and development aimed at making unity the most desirable option before the 2011 referendum. Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia have all restarted infrastructure projects -- mostly roads -- but coordination was so far lacking. Instead of building roads connecting major population centers, all countries were competing and building "10 parallel roads one-tenth of the way".

SE Gration agreed and lamented that the GOSS should increase their focus on development as opposed to weaponry, particularly given that 80% of their teachers are untrained and 85% of their population illiterate.

¶ 9. (C) Following on SE Gration's comments, Moussa argued that since 85 percent of Southern Sudanese can't read, "we must decide [the issue of referendum] for them." Adding that the USG and the AL were now like-minded on policies in the Horn of Africa, Moussa pressed for U.S. backing for Sudanese unity. The AL hopes to hold a meeting by the end of 2009 to discuss proposals for assistance to Sudan and will invite the UN, US, EU, and other actors. Recognizing that "you can't work without the U.S.", Moussa also expressed a desire to promote Sudanese debt forgiveness. Recalling the AL's 2004 decision to suspend Sudan's debt and a unilateral decision by Japan to do the same, Moussa hoped more countries could examine forgiveness while simultaneously building economic capacity through infrastructure development, without which, he argued, the international community was simply promoting already rampant corruption. SE Gration concluded by reaffirming in clear terms the right of the South to vote for separation or unity under the CPA. The choice was one for the South to decide.

¶ 10. (U) A/S Carson and SE Gration have cleared on this message.
CRETZ